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Bangalore Mirror

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Traffic police face tall task of managing city's 1.22 crore vehicles with 4,516 hands on deck — that is one policeman for every 2,700 vehicles — which is a 26% shortfall as per a Home Ministry report

ROUND THE CLOCK, CHOCK-A-BLOCK

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Bengaluru, one of India's fastest-growing metropolitan cities, is facing a shortage of traffic enforcement staff despite its rapidly increasing vehicle count. According to official figures, the Bengaluru City Traffic Police (BTP) currently has only 4,516 personnel to manage an overwhelming 1.22 crore registered vehicles meaning there is just one traffic policeman for every 2,700 vehicles on city roads.

According to a 2015 report by the Home Ministry's Bureau of Police Research and Development, there should ideally be one traffic police officer for every 700 vehicles. By that yardstick, Bengaluru is currently facing an estimated 26% shortage of traffic personnel.

Beyond the struggle to regulate traffic, the shortage also results in tough working conditions for the constables deployed on the roads. Many spend long hours, often eight or more standing in heavy traffic, working irregular shifts,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6 »

KAUSHIK JN

AIRPORT ALARM

Kempegowda International Airport tops country's list of airport thefts, recording four incidents between Jan & Nov this year

CITY PAGE 5

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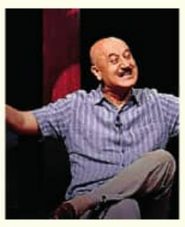
THINGS TO DO

01 Earthen treasures

The 4th edition of the Bengaluru Potters Market showcases handmade ceramics, exquisite tableware, home decor, expressive sculptures, and one-of-a-kind pieces. **Where: Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath, Seshadripuram; When: Dec 5 to 7, 10.30 am onwards**

02 Journey of life



As part of the Bengaluru Theatre Festival Season 2, Anupam Kher will be narrating and dramatising the important events of his life in a play titled 'Kucch bhi ho sakta hai'. **Where: Prestige Centre for Performing Arts, Konanakunte; When: December 5, 8 pm**

03 Fusion music

Thaikkudam Bridge will be performing live, bringing their signature fusion of rock, folk, classical, indie, and world music in a high energy concert. **Where: Forum South, Konanakunte; When: Dec 13, 7 pm**

04 Layers of love

As part of the Bengaluru Theatre Festival Season 2, Lillete Dubey, Ira Dubey and Joy Sengupta will be starring in 'Vodka & No Tonic', a witty, layered exploration of love, ageing, and modern relationships. **Where: Good Shepherd Auditorium, Shanthala Nagar; When: December 5, 8 pm**

05 Techno unleashed

Mob Mind x Caged present a full-blown techno takeover ft Hypnotic Black Magic, a Berlin and Lisbon-based DJ and producer, renowned for her uplifting sets that take audiences on euphoric journeys. **Where: Koramangala SOCIAL; When: December 6, 6 pm**

New smart cards replace old licences

Transport Department introduces smart cards for RC and driving licences, embedded with microchip and unique QR code containing all mandatory vehicle or driver-related information digitally

FILE PHOTO

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The Karnataka Transport Department has launched new high-security smart cards for Registration Certificates (RC) and Driving Licences (DL). The cards, which will be issued for the next five years, adhere to the central government's 'One Nation, One Card' mandate under GSR 174(E), ensuring uniformity across states.

The upgraded smart cards came into effect on December 1 and will be used for the next five years. Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy said the roll-out follows a 2019 notification from the Union Government mandating a uniform smart card format for vehicle owners and driving licence holders across the country. He clarified that the change will not affect those who already have a valid DL or RC as the new smart cards will be issued only to fresh applicants. However, those applying for renewals or updates to their existing cards, including removal of hypothecation, will be issued the upgraded version.

The newly introduced smart cards are manufactured using polycarbonate material and engraved with laser-etching technology, making them significantly more durable and tamper-resistant compared to the current laminated PVC cards. Each card is embedded with a 64-KB microchip that digitally stores all mandatory vehicle or driver-related information. Additionally, every card features a unique QR code generated by the National Informatics Centre (NIC), enabling quick digital access to all vehicle or licence details.

Change will not affect those already having valid DL or RC as new smart cards will be issued only to fresh applicants or those seeking renewals or updates to existing cards, says Transport Minister

According to the Transport Department, production of the cards is being handled at a centralised facility in Bengaluru by Rosmerta Technologies Ltd. The centre is currently equipped with two high-capacity Matica Fintech SPA S-7000 smart printing machines. "These are first of their kind in India. These machines can print between 500 and 600 smart cards per hour, enabling daily production of nearly 15,000 to 16,000 cards. The Transport Department says the upgraded infrastructure will help significantly reduce delays in card processing and delivery," said Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy.

The cost of each smart card has been fixed at Rs 200, which includes Rs 64.46 paid to the technology service provider and Rs 135.54 deposited with the government. The redesigned RC smart card will feature detailed printed information on both sides, including registration validity dates, engine and chassis numbers, ownership status etc.

While the new RC cards have already begun rolling out, the issuance of DL smart cards is scheduled to start from December 15, after the integration of NIC software with the Transport Department's database is completed. Once operational, the system will allow personalised driving licence cards to be verified digitally at respective Regional Transport Offices (RTO) and Assistant Regional Transport Offices (ARTO) across the state.

How a past equation fuels modern physics

Most of us first hear about the irrational number π (pi) — rounded off as 3.14, with an infinite number of decimal digits — in school, where we learn about its use in the context of a circle. More recently, scientists have developed supercomputers that can estimate up to trillions of its digits.

Now, physicists at the Centre for High Energy Physics (CHEP), Indian Institute of Science (IISc), have found that pure mathematical formulae used to calculate the value of pi 100 years ago have connections to fundamental physics of today – showing up in theoretical models of percolation, turbulence, and certain aspects of black holes.

"Scientists have computed pi up to 200 trillion digits using an algorithm called the Chudnovsky algorithm. These algorithms are actually based on Ramanujan's work," informs Aninda Sinha, Professor at CHEP and senior author of the new study.

The question that Sinha and Faizan Bhat, the first author and a former IISc PhD student, asked was: Why should such astonishing formulae exist at all? In their work, they looked for a physics-based answer. "We wanted to see whether the starting point of his formulae fit naturally into some physics. In other words, is there a physical world where Ramanujan's mathematics appears on its own?" said Sinha.

They found that Ramanujan's formulae naturally come up within a broad class of theories called conformal field theories, specifically within logarithmic conformal field theories.

The study shows that Ramanujan's century-old formulae have a hitherto hidden application in making current high-energy physics calculations faster and more tractable. **— BMB**

Bill to criminalise social boycott, up to three years jail and ₹1 lakh fine

The state government is set to introduce the Karnataka Protection Against Social Boycott (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Bill, 2025, in the Belagavi winter session starting December 8, aiming to make socially ostracising an individual or family a punishable offence. Under the proposed legislation, anyone who imposes, incites, or organises a social boycott through meetings, panchayats, or assemblies can face up to three years in jail, a fine of Rs 1 lakh, or both. Victims of such boycotts will be able to directly approach police stations or courts.

The bill seeks to address gaps in existing laws, recognising that social boycotts harm human dignity and disproportionately affect marginalised communities. Prohibited acts include excluding individuals or groups from villages or communities, restricting access to public or religious places, preventing participation in social, cultural, or religious functions, obstructing education or employment opportunities, denying services, discriminating based on gender or identity, and interfering with social or business relationships. Drawing inspiration from Maharashtra's 2016 law, Karnataka's legislation aims to establish clear penalties for offenders. **— BMB**

AT BELAGAVI SESSION

Hate speech could land you in jail for 3 years

The state government is preparing to introduce a dedicated law to curb hate speech and hate-motivated offences, with the proposed 'Hate Crimes and Hate (Prevention and Control) Bill, 2025' likely to receive cabinet approval on Thursday. The final draft, earlier discussed in a June cabinet meeting, is now ready and expected to be presented during the Belagavi legislature session after cabinet clearance. The bill proposes a punishment of up to three years in prison or a fine of Rs 5,000 — or both — for any individual or group that promotes hatred on the grounds of religion, ethnicity, caste, community, gender, sexual orientation, place of birth, language, residence, disability or tribal identity. Citing rising inflammatory rhetoric that disturb public peace, the government argues that a stringent legal framework has become necessary. **— BMB**

Winter session costs set to rise 37% to ₹21 cr

This year's Belagavi winter session, scheduled from December 8 to 19, is estimated to cost Rs 21 crore, up from last year's Rs 15.30 crore; a sharp increase of about 37.3 per cent, driven mainly by enhanced security and food arrangements. Officials say annual session expenses typically rise by around 10 per cent, but this year's surge follows heightened alertness after the recent New Delhi bomb blast.

Security bills surge nearly 50%

Sources said that security deployment has jumped from the usual 4,000 police personnel to more than 6,000 this year, a 50 per cent increase in manpower. The Home Department has earmarked Rs 25 crore, while the district administration has allocated another Rs 16 crore to support session-related arrangements, reflecting the intensified security focus. The Speaker's chair and front desk in the Assembly hall cost Rs 42.93 lakh to refurbish last year. Another Rs 21.98 lakh was spent on replacing the old woodwork and cushions. Further, Rs 67.67 lakh was spent on portraits and artworks inside the complex, including Rs 13.34 lakh for new 8×5 ft portraits of national leaders in 2023. These were later rejected by an expert committee for lack of likeness, raising questions over value for money. Session spending has swung sharply over the years. The costs fell through 2014–16, spiked to Rs 21.59 crore in 2017, dropped to Rs 13.85 crore in 2018, climbed steadily to Rs 23 crore in 2023, and then slid back to Rs 15.5 crore in 2024. **— BMB**

CRIME FILES

Police official accused of stealing ₹11 lakh from suspect's car

ThA police head constable has been accused of stealing Rs 11 lakh from a cybercrime suspect's car, parked inside the Police Commissioner's Office premises on December 1.

According to officials, the suspect, who was arrested in a cyber fraud case, had stored the cash inside his vehicle while being questioned at the station. During this time, head constable Zabiullah allegedly removed the bag containing the money from the car.

The suspect was later sent to jail by Inspector Umesh and his team. After securing bail and returning to collect his belongings, he discovered the cash missing and alerted officials. CCTV footage reportedly confirmed that Zabiullah had taken the bag.

Following the complaint, Deputy Commissioner Raja Khasim directed a search of the constable's house. However, Zabiullah allegedly attempted to obstruct the investigation. Police reportedly found bundles of currency hidden beneath a bed, along with jewellery believed to have been purchased using the stolen money.

DCP Raja Khasim explained the amount has been recovered completely and action will be taken based on the inquiry. **–BMB**

Four police personnel suspended for dereliction of duty

Four police personnel from Sanjaynagar, Subramanya Nagar, and Nandini Layout police stations have been suspended for negligence and failure to perform their duties responsibly.

Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) Srinivas Murthy of Nandini Layout Police Station has been suspended for allegedly refusing to register a complaint. According to reports, a resident named Nithyananda approached the station to file a complaint, but Murthy reportedly declined to accept it and behaved in an unprofessional manner. The complainant later highlighted the incident on Twitter, prompting departmental action. In another case, ASI Jayaramegowda and head constable Dharma from Subramanya Nagar Police Station have been suspended for ignoring a court directive. The officers reportedly failed to respond to a summons requiring them to produce witnesses before the court within the stipulated time. Meanwhile, constable Nazeer of Sanjaynagar Police Station has also been suspended for unauthorised absence from duty. He was assigned to security duty at Chief Minister's Cauvery residence but failed to report without prior permission or explanation. **–BMB**

Man kills bedridden wife, later takes own life

In a tragic incident reported from Subramanyapura Police Station limits, a 65-year-old retired BMTC bus driver allegedly strangled his bedridden wife to death before ending his own life on Tuesday.

The deceased have been identified as Baby (65) and her husband, Venkateshan. The couple lived with their son, Anil Kumar, near 3rd Cross, Chikkagoudanapalya.

Police said the incident came to light around 12.45 pm when Anil's wife returned home with their child and found Venkateshan hanging from the ceiling fan with a plastic rope. Baby was found motionless in her wheelchair. She was declared dead upon examination.

Police said, according to family members, Baby had been bedridden for five years after suffering a paralytic stroke, which left her unable to walk or speak. Venkateshan was her primary caregiver and had reportedly been under immense stress due to her condition. He had allegedly expressed his inability to cope, telling family members he might one day kill his wife and himself.

Investigators believe Venkateshan took the extreme step when the family was away, first strangling Baby with a rope and later using the same rope to die by suicide. Subramanyapura police have registered a case.

.–BMB

Sandalwood worth ₹1.75 cr seized, three arrested

The Bengaluru City police have arrested three sandalwood smugglers and seized red sandalwood worth Rs 1.75 crore, along with four vehicles used in the operation. The crackdown was carried out in separate raids based on specific intelligence inputs from different police stations.

In the first operation, Hulimavu police received information about a suspicious car parked near Gottigere Lake on Bannerghatta Main Road. When the police reached the spot, they found red sandalwood logs stored illegally inside the vehicle. One person was arrested on the spot, and 95 kg of red sandalwood was seized.

During sustained interrogation, the accused revealed that he and his associates had been procuring red sandalwood from a man in Kadapa district of Andhra Pradesh at lower prices and selling it for higher margins in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.

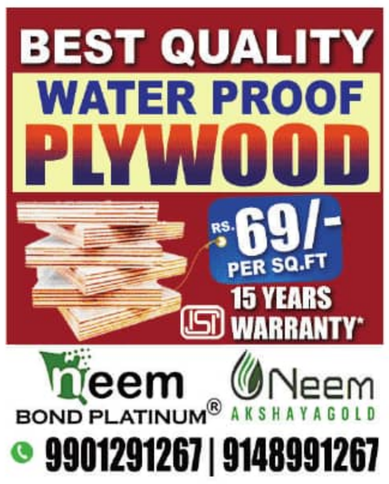
Based on his inputs, police raided multiple locations and recovered 316 kg of red sandalwood and a car from Chinnakandili village in Tamil Nadu and 496 kg of red sandalwood and a car from Kulumepalya. The search for additional accomplices is ongoing.

In another major seizure, RT Nagar police acted on a tip-off about a Bolero vehicle transporting red sandalwood. Officers tracked the vehicle to the onion market in KHB Block, where two suspects were arrested.

A search of the vehicle revealed 754.2 kg of red sandalwood, valued at Rs 75.4 lakh, concealed between onion sacks to evade detection.

Police investigations revealed that the arrested duo hail from Andhra Pradesh and had no stable employment. To make quick money, they allegedly stole red sandalwood logs from the Sundepalli region near Madanapalle and brought the material to Bengaluru for sale. The accused are currently under police custody and further investigations are underway.

–BMB



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Concrete footpaths still choking city's avenue trees

Urban greenery suffering due to poor oversight, blocked rainwater percolation, mismanaged footpaths, prompting activists demanding urgent removal of concrete around Bengaluru trees

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Despite the authorities concerned spending considerable money and time to create awareness about the need to leave space around trees for rainwater percolation, the lack of coordination between the engineering and forest departments continues to undermine efforts to nurture trees and maintain greenery in the city. It is not that the forest department has failed to plant saplings capable of growing into full trees; both the department and environmental activists have consistently worked to make Bengaluru a greener city. However, the engineering wings of various city corporations and their contractors have repeatedly nullified these efforts. While engineers rarely inspect developmental works, especially footpath projects, contractors often deploy unskilled workers who have little understanding of the importance of protecting trees while laying footpaths.

The problem is compounded by forest department officials who seldom inspect footpaths to ensure adequate space is left around trees for water percolation. Instead, they typically wait for residents or environmental activists to raise complaints. On Thursday morning, several residents approached the Chief Commissioner of the Greater Bengaluru Authority during his visit to RV Road, drawing his attention to concrete cast tightly around tree bases along the stretch. He assured them that steps would be taken to provide adequate space for rainwater to reach the roots.

KAUSHIK JN

Lack of inspections leaves trees suffocating under concrete despite directives

"I complained to the GBA Chief Commissioner about concrete around the trees on RV Road. As per norms, one or one-and-half meter space should be left around the trees for rainwater percolation– Guruprasad RK, Secretary, Basavanagudi Heritage Residents' Welfare Association

One resident noted that concrete laid right up to the trunk violates norms that require one to one-and-a-half meters of open soil around each tree. He expressed hope that the authorities would rectify the issue promptly. Environmental activists echoed this concern, with one urging authorities to adopt basic, sensible design standards that allow proper percolation to maintain long-term tree stability. He pointed out that many tree falls occur because concrete footpaths suffocate the stump and root system, gradually weakening the trees. He also highlighted that in several areas, tree guard boxes are misused as dumping spots, further harming the roots. Additionally, the selection of inappropriate tree species for avenues often leads to large and invasive root systems damaging roads, pipelines, and nearby houses. He argued that cities should prioritise native species known for high carbon sequestration and ecological resilience.

Another activist stressed the need for sufficient space around trees to allow rainwater to seep into the soil. He observed that on RV Road, several trees lacked even minimal open space at their bases, making immediate corrective measures necessary.

A senior forest official from the authority stated that he would instruct his team to inspect the locations and ensure compliance. He added that jurisdictional engineers would also be asked to maintain adequate space around all avenue trees. In June 2025, the Special Commissioner for Forest, Environment, and Climate Change Management Division issued a clear directive mandating the removal of concrete, stones, and blocks within a one-meter radius of all trees. The purpose of the order was to safeguard tree health and enhance ecological stability.

Despite such instructions, the problem persists. A report published on June 27, 2025 highlighted that concretisation around trees continues unchecked in several parts of the city, demonstrating how enforcement gaps allow harmful practices to remain in place.

Vacant space could host hoops

Swayam Jagruthi, an NGO, has requested the MLA of Vijaynagar, Krishnappa, to intervene and convert a vacant space near the Hosahalli metro station into a basketball court.

Speaking to Bangalore Mirror, Ajay Kumar, president of Swayam Jagruthi, said that the vacant space near the metro station is currently being cleared to be converted into a park. "The entire stretch of Hosahalli is covered by parks on either side of the main road that runs through the locality. The authorities must take the initiative to convert the space into a basketball court or another type of sports facility instead," he said.

Noting that there is only Gandhi Ground where one can play cricket in the nearby vicinity, he highlighted the growing need for the state to focus on increasing accessible play areas. "Children need real play spaces — not just walking paths and benches. A basketball court here would give them a place to learn discipline, teamwork, and physical endurance. I hope the authorities recognise the long-term benefits," he explained. He further noted that while there are plenty of commercial play arenas, they are inaccessible to a large section of society due to their high costs.

Residents said the initiative could help tackle the increasing trend of children spending long hours indoors. "Children need more outdoor options. With a proper court, they will have a place to gather, learn teamwork, and stay physically fit," said Rohan (name changed), a parent who supported the proposal. — BMB

CCTVs to keep eye out on flyovers, skywalks

Alarmed by a recent robbery on the Dairy Circle flyover, police have asked the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) to install CCTV cameras and LED lighting across all city flyovers, skywalks, and underpasses. GBA Chief Commissioner Maheshwara Rao said the proposal covers 42 flyovers and 29 skywalks/underpasses, with police specifically seeking advanced cameras on flyover stretches and repairs to non-functional civic units. While many cameras are already installed under the Nirbhaya scheme, additional systems will be added wherever police identify gaps, with funding drawn from Nirbhaya allocations or municipal grants. GBA has directed commissioners of all five municipal corporations to coordinate installation based on police recommendations. — BMB

Preparation on to shift out strays

GBA Chief Commissioner M Maheshwar Rao said the authority is preparing a system to financially support individuals or institutions willing to look after stray dogs on private premises, in line with Supreme Court directions. Schools, colleges, hospitals and sports complexes have been asked to appoint nodal officers and report on the number of stray dogs on their campuses. Dogs in public spaces may be relocated to designated areas such as dumping yards or unused land, with expenses covered by the respective municipal bodies. — BMB

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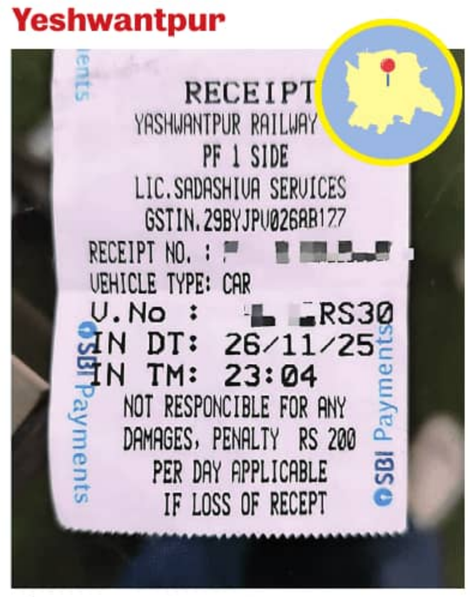
Parking discrepancy

Yeshwantpur



It is surprising that at Yeshwanthpur Railway Station officials write a voucher showing "Rs 30" and claim the charge is Rs.30 even for parking durations under two hours.

Eroded hump

Malleswaram

A half-eroded road hump at 9th Cross on Margosa Road, Malleswaram has now turned into an unintended "speed breaker," causing discomfort for daily commuters.

Garbage menace

Guddahalli

The New Guddadahalli, Mysore Road stretch has increasingly turned into a garbage dumping spot, causing sanitation problems and inconvenience for residents and commuters.

B'luru records highest airport thefts in India

Data shared in recent Lok Sabha reply reveals city tops list of airport thefts with four incidents noted this year; theft incidents recorded in 6 airports

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We like to think airports are untouchable zones, where theft is nearly impossible, but numbers reveal otherwise. Bengaluru's Kempegowda International Airport tops the country's list for airport thefts, recording four incidents between January 1 and November 27, 2025, according to a Lok Sabha reply by Union Minister of State for Civil Aviation Murlidhar Mohol on Thursday. Out of nine total thefts nationwide, Hyderabad, Delhi IGI, Mumbai, Nagpur, and Rajkot reported only one each. While the numbers seem small, the sheer security presence makes each incident significant, highlighting gaps in baggage handling in high-traffic zones.

File photo of passengers at Bengaluru's Kempegowda International Airport

Number of theft incidents at airports (from 01.01.2025 to 27.11.2025)

Name of Airport	Number of Incidents
Bengaluru	04
Hyderabad	01
IGI Airport	01
Mumbai	01
Nagpur	01
Rajkot	01
Total	09

FROM MURLIDHAR MOHOL'S RESPONSE IN LOK SABHA

High security

The Minister noted these incidents occurred during screening and cargo handling, under strict BCAS regulations. Theft falls under state law-and-order jurisdiction, with complaints lodged to local police. BCAS mandates full CCTV coverage, frisking of ground staff, deployment of airline security in Baggage Makeup Areas (BMA) and Baggage Breakup Areas (BBA), and foot patrolling by ASG and APSU personnel.

Preventive checks

The Minister said that CISF help desks allow passengers to lodge complaints, which are referred to police. CCTV control rooms are manned by trained staff monitoring suspicious activity, while airlines supervise baggage loaders. Close coordination between CISF and airline security ensures swift tracking of anomalies, reinforcing a multi-layered security network despite occasional lapses.

Commuter concern

For Bengaluru travellers, four thefts may appear negligible against millions of bags processed, yet the clustering in the city's busiest airport is concerning. The urban-rural Bengaluru corridor sees high passenger and cargo throughput, where even minor lapses in BMA and BBA zones create disproportionate impact. Complaints are managed via CPGRAMS, INGRAM, and AirSewa portals, providing passengers a structured grievance channel.

Security paradox

Bengaluru Airport illustrates a paradox: even a high-security hub is not immune to theft. Continuous CCTV monitoring, patrolling, and staff supervision remain critical. The Minister emphasised that vigilance, rapid reporting, and coordinated checks are ongoing priorities to curb such incidents.

Real time monitoring

Sanman K, a regular traveller said, "Though four thefts among millions of bags may appear statistically small, the incidents are a wake-up call for both passengers and authorities. Strengthened staff training, real-time CCTV monitoring, and robust grievance mechanisms are vital to ensure Bengaluru Airport retains its reputation as one of India's safest and most secure aviation hubs."

B'luru couple held for smuggling drugs worth ₹18.6-crore

A Bengaluru couple allegedly working as couriers for an international drug syndicate managed to smuggle 18 kg of high-grade hydro ganja, worth Rs 18.6 crore, through Kempegowda International Airport by hiding the contraband inside food packets in their backpacks. They were arrested a few hours later by the Mahalakshmi Layout police on Sunday (November 30, 2025) while waiting to meet their handler.

The case has triggered serious questions about security checks at the airport. Bengaluru Police have raised the issue with Customs after the couple walked through screening systems despite tightened surveillance measures in place ahead of New Year festivities.

The arrested duo, identified as Shafiuddin Sheikh, a car mechanic, and his wife, Sara Simran, are residents of Kammanahalli. Police said they had travelled to Bangkok on tourist visas and returned carrying the narcotics.

Investigators said the pair had been enticed with free travel, accommodation, and a cash payment to act as drug mules. Acting on specific intelligence, a police team tracked the couple after they landed and apprehended them before the consignment could be delivered. The team is analysing communications to identify others involved in the network. The accused have been remanded to police custody. **-BMB**

CCB busts illegal SIM box network

In a major cybercrime crackdown, the Central Crime Branch (CCB) has busted a network that used advanced equipment to illegally convert international calls into local calls, causing financial losses to telecom operators and posing a threat to national security.

Acting on a complaint filed on November 28 by a registration officer from Vodafone Limited, the Cybercrime Police Station began probing a data centre operating out of the fourth floor of Devaraj Building in Naidu Layout, Electronic City Phase-2. A CCB team raided the premises and seized 28 SIM boxes and 1,193 SIM cards among other items, all valued at around Rs 40 lakh. **-BMB**

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Is tiger in captivity guilty? DNA report still awaited

Saragur deaths: 7 tigers, 8 cubs rescued, 2 injured remain in captivity even as test report likely to take 2 more months

Garima Prasher
garima.prasher@timesofindia.com
TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Forest officials rescued tiger cubs in Hunsur on November 30

The Karnataka Forest Department (KFD) is still awaiting the DNA analysis report to determine whether the tiger captured following the deaths of three people in Saragur Taluk, Mysuru, and which has been in captivity since, is the one responsible for these deaths. According to KFD officials, the DNA analysis report is expected in at least two more months.

"We have halted the tiger capture operation as there have been no incidents or sightings. Overall, seven adult tigers and eight cubs were rescued in the operation that began on November 6. Of these, all except two tigers — one injured male and one injured female — have been released back into the wild. We are awaiting the DNA analysis report, which is expected to take another two months," said S Prabhakaran, director of Bandipur Tiger Reserve.

After the tigers were captured, DNA samples for analysis were sent to the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology in Hyderabad. The report is awaited to confirm the department's suspicions regarding the captured tigers.

"All the secondary evidence collected by the Department points towards the male tiger that sustained a snare injury and was captured nearly a month ago. The remaining tigers and cubs captured in the operation have been released into deep forest areas," said a senior KFD official. The Department has also informed that the state's first wildlife forensic science laboratory in Bengaluru is operational and is carrying out all kinds of forensic analyses, except DNA profiling.

"We do not have the required representative samples to carry out DNA profiling. However, the Department has written to all the zoos across the state requesting representative samples of major mammals. There should be at least three to four samples for each animal for the lab to begin DNA profiling," said the official.

In the past, the Department was exploring a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) for representative samples for DNA profiling. The Department had also written to the Institute, and the MoU process was expected to be completed a couple of months ago. However, officials did not provide any information regarding the process. To run the laboratory smoothly, KFD has trained six field staff in wildlife forensic cases.

Karnataka Forest Department awaits DNA analysis to confirm if captured male tiger caused three deaths in Saragur Taluk

However, in the absence of adequate representative samples, the Department is currently dependent on the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB) in Hyderabad, the Wildlife Institute of India in Dehradun, and the Tamil Nadu Forest Department for sample analysis. Analyses requiring urgent results are being sent to the Institute of Animal Health and Veterinary Biologicals (IAH&VB) in Hebbal and the local forensic laboratory.

Students rally against college takeover

Th All India Democratic Students' Organisation (AIDSO) has written to the Department of Collegiate Education opposing plans by Dr Manmohan Singh Bangalore City University (BCU) to convert two historic government colleges into constituent colleges. BCU reportedly sought detailed information on staff and finances of the Government Arts College, Bengaluru, as a precursor to taking control, with similar steps considered for Government Ramanarayana Chellaram (RC) College of Commerce and Management.

AIDSO and educationists warn this could severely affect students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. "Constituent colleges in other parts of the state charge 200–300% higher fees than government colleges. Government Arts and RC Colleges have long provided affordable education to poor, working-class, and rural students. Conversion risks depriving thousands of students," an AIDSO spokesperson said. The organisation demands that both colleges remain fully government-run and strengthened with adequate grants. It also urges a public assurance that no government college will be converted in the future. Educationists stress that financially constrained universities may struggle to maintain quality education if more colleges are added. They recommend prioritising infrastructure development, filling vacant posts, and improving academic standards rather than administrative restructuring. — BMB

Minors' parental custody: 'Be truthful'

The Karnataka High Court has ruled that when a parent applies for a minor's passport, the declaration on parents' marital status and custody must be truthful, with supporting documents like a divorce decree or custody order. Justice Suraj Govindaraj made this observation while allowing two petitions filed by minors through their mother for a fresh passport and renewal of an existing one. The applications had been pending as the mandatory undertaking from both parents was not provided.

Deputy Solicitor General Shanti Bhushan H explained that a natural guardian must submit a proper declaration. If divorced, it must state who has custody; only that parent may apply. If divorce proceedings are ongoing, the applicant must explain why the other parent's consent is unavailable.

In this case, the mother declared that a divorce had been granted and custody awarded to her, though no decree existed. She claimed she "mistakenly" selected the option due to being uneducated. The Court did not fully accept this but refrained from penal action, considering the ongoing dispute and that the father did not press charges.

The husband said he had no objection to passport issuance and renewal, provided visitation rights were respected. Authorities must process applications within ten days; violations may lead to passport cancellation or criminal action. — BMB

Long hours, irregular shifts can cause fatigue

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

and managing without consistent offs, leading to fatigue and health issues. Karthik Reddy, Joint Commissioner of Police (Traffic), said, "Traffic congestion in Bengaluru continues to rise, and the department is taking necessary measures to address it. There is no shortage of personnel as 780 home guards and an additional 800 traffic wardens have been deployed to assist in managing traffic and in the upcoming month we will have newly recruited traffic officials. Along with new technology, AI-based camera surveillance has also been installed. Additional personnel are being assigned to required jurisdictions, and appropriate action is underway."

The state government has sanctioned 6,076 posts for the traffic department, but only 4,516 personnel are currently on duty, including senior officers such as the Joint Commissioner, DCPs, and CPIs. Around 1,560 posts have remained vacant for nearly a year. Due to this shortfall, many high-traffic stretches, busy junctions, and accident-prone areas continue to remain understaffed and poorly monitored.

The city handles a continuous stream of public events including political rallies, official visits, festivals, religious processions, and VIP zero-traffic arrangements all of which require significant deployment for bandobast and traffic regulation. However, the shortage of personnel has made it increasingly difficult to manage these responsibilities effectively.

Signal locations

Currently, Bengaluru has 501 operational traffic signals. Due to rising congestion, 50 more locations have been earmarked for signal installation. To streamline traffic enforcement, the police have requested BBMP to provide 10 additional towing vehicles. At present, 22 towing vehicles are in operation across various traffic police stations in the city.

Professor MN Sreehari, a traffic and infrastructure expert, explains that police personnel need to be visibly present on the ground, especially during peak morning and evening hours. "At present, people tend to follow rules only when they see police officers because enforcement from an authority carries weight. Lane discipline and road behaviour can improve only when there are enough officers monitoring and acting against violations. While a common citizen pointing out violations is often ignored, fines imposed by the police are taken seriously. This is why increasing the strength of the traffic police is essential."

> **"There is no shortage of personnel as 780 home guards and an additional 800 traffic wardens have been deployed to assist in managing traffic and in the upcoming month we will have newly recruited traffic officials** – Karthik Reddy, Joint Commissioner of Police (Traffic)

Sreehari says the government must review the ratio of traffic police to vehicles on the road. Additionally, officers should be provided adequate leave and staffing support to maintain a balance between their health, workload, and personal life. Although the police department has recruitment norms, filling vacancies is often challenging. "Ideally, there should be one police officer for every 30 vehicles, but achieving such a ratio is highly challenging. Recruitment and retirement patterns add to the complexity while hiring new personnel takes at least six months, officers retire every month. This creates a constant gap between the required and available workforce, leading to a persistent staffing mismatch," Sreehari explains.

Support system

Currently, Home Guards support the force by managing basic tasks like regulating signals and pedestrian movement, but they lack the authority and specialised training needed to handle duties such as levying penalties, responding to accidents, or dealing with defiant motorists, which is why increasing trained traffic personnel is critical for effective traffic management and enforcement, Shreehari adds.

While the Bengaluru Traffic Police relies on technology such as the Traffic Management Centre (TMC), CCTV surveillance, and automatic red-light violation systems to offset the manpower gap, experts caution that technology alone cannot replace the need for adequate personnel on the ground.

Traffic experts say the staffing crisis has a direct impact on road safety, congestion regulation, and enforcement of crucial rules such as drunken driving, speeding, illegal parking, and lane discipline. The lack of manpower, they argue, creates an enforcement vacuum enabling violations to go unchecked and worsening Bengaluru's already notorious traffic situation.

Passengers stranded, luggage lost amid IndiGo flight delays, cancellations

Domestic and international travellers face disruption, missing bags, overcrowded airports, and rescheduled flights, creating mounting anger and confusion

Iffath Fathima
iffath.fathima@timesofindia.com

TWEETS @BangaloreMirror

Thousands of IndiGo passengers faced a horrific travel ordeal after the airline suffered a major disruption, leading to more than 200 flight cancellations since Tuesday and affecting key airports, including Bengaluru, Delhi, Mumbai and Hyderabad. At Kempegowda International Airport, many travellers remained stranded for hours as sudden delays and cancellations piled up, with several complaining that staff were unresponsive and unable to manage the escalating situation.

With several departures pushed back indefinitely and some flights diverted to other states despite passengers being bound for entirely different destinations, flyers described the ordeal as "traumatising" and "the worst experience" they had ever had.

IN FOCUS
Flight mayhem

Ruquiya, an Indiranagar resident and home baker, said her husband's early-morning Bengaluru–Pune flight became traumatic after hours of delays ended with the aircraft being rerouted to Mumbai instead. She said the ordeal was so distressing that the family had decided they would never book an IndiGo flight again.

IndiGo statement

The airline said, "We acknowledge IndiGo's operations have been significantly disrupted over the past two days and apologise for the inconvenience. Unforeseen challenges—including minor technology glitches, winter-related schedule changes, adverse weather, aviation congestion, and updated crew rostering rules—impacted operations. To restore stability, we have adjusted schedules for the next 48 hours and are offering affected customers alternate travel arrangements or refunds."

Travellers faced havoc as flights were cancelled or postponed. Mangalore Football Club's jerseys for a Qatar tournament went missing, while passengers from Mumbai to Mangaluru endured long waits, leaving many plans disrupted

"My husband had a flight from Bengaluru to Pune at 3 am on Thursday. Since Tuesday we had been seeing news of cancellations, so we kept trying to reach IndiGo customer care on Wednesday for nearly two hours, but no one answered. I even tried calling the airport, but it was just an automated response. Late that night, around 11.45 pm, we received a message saying the flight had been cancelled, and it asked us to click for a refund, but the refund option did not work," said Ruquiya.

She said the airport was in a terrible state, with people screaming, running around, and no staff to guide anyone. "They handed over the boarding pass and said the flight would depart at 3.15 am. At the gate, passengers kept waiting for buses to take them to the aircraft. They waited until 4.15 am. The staff were completely unresponsive and did not know how to handle the situation. The flight finally took off around 4.45 am."

Her husband's relief was short-lived. "Passengers were told the flight could not land in Pune because other flights had just landed and there was no space. The pilot kept circling the airport. They landed in Mumbai at 7 am and were made to sit inside the aircraft for 30 minutes, and then suddenly they were asked to deboard. The crew told them the next connecting flight to Pune would be in the evening, but there was no assurance. He could not afford to miss his meeting, so he took a taxi from Mumbai to Pune," she said.

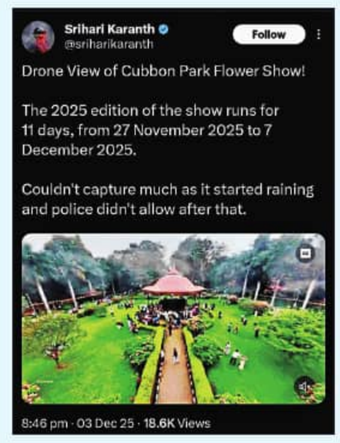
Aanchel Batheja, Senior Account Manager at PR Pundit Havas Red, said, "I had a 10 am flight on Thursday that was delayed until 12 pm. Bengaluru airport was extremely overcrowded, and the delay had thrown off our entire schedule. We had an event to attend, and the whole day was wasted."

Mangalore football club in crisis

Yunus Parvez, Mangalore FC committee member, said team jerseys for the Doha league haven't arrived despite a passenger travelling on November 30. IndiGo gave conflicting updates, and airport officials denied receiving the luggage. "All we got was a 'sorry for the inconvenience'," he said. Passengers from Mumbai to Mangaluru also faced chaos, with multiple cancellations and delays. Mellisa, from Berlin via London, endured repeated flight reschedules, while Vidya reported overcrowding and frustrated travellers.

SOCIALTATTLE

THAT WENT VIRAL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Couldn't capture much as it started raining and police didn't allow after that.
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A drone view of the Cubbon Park Flower Show, posted by X user @sriharikaranth, went viral on social media on Thursday. The 2025 edition of the flower show, which runs from November 27 to December 7, was briefly interrupted by rain, and police later restricted drone operations, limiting the footage he could capture.

A Reddit user, posting under the handle bobbyeeeee on r/Bangalore, shared an image pointing out that the vehicle's number plate displayed the name "Rahul Dev" instead of a registration number.

BANGALORE MIRROR TAGGED

Bangalore Mirror was tagged by X user @yoda_codiyapa to highlight that street lights were not functioning along entire stretches of Sarjapur Road, prompting a request for the issue to be looked into by BMTC Bengaluru.

INBRIEF

'Confident that review petition will be dismissed'

ISKCON Bangalore has clarified that the Supreme Court has only issued a notice to the organisation regarding the land plea. The decision to review its May 16 verdict will be made by the Supreme Court at the next hearing in February 2026. The organisation has also emphasised that the Akshaya Patra Foundation is an independent charitable trust registered under the Indian Trusts Act 1882 (Reg. No. 154). ISKCON Bangalore is the settlor of this foundation as per the Trust Deed executed on October 16, 2001, and ISKCON Bangalore was represented by its President, Madhu Pandit Dasa, who is also the Founder and Chairman of Akshaya Patra.

Madhu Pandit Dasa said, "We are confident that the judgment delivered by the Supreme Court in favour of ISKCON Bangalore on May 16, is flawless and contains no errors on the face of the record. Hence, we are confident that the review petition will be dismissed at the next hearing, scheduled for February next year, when the admissibility of the same will be considered." –BMB

Classic cars rally against drugs

In a unique public outreach initiative, the Bengaluru City Police, in collaboration with the Vintage Car Owners' Association, will hold a Vintage Car and Bike Rally on Sunday, December 7, 2025, to raise awareness about the increasing threat of drug abuse and drug peddling in the city.

With drug consumption among young people emerging as a major concern and contributing to rising fear and insecurity among residents, the rally forms part of the police department's ongoing 'War Against Drugs' campaign. Officials said the event aims to sensitise the public, particularly young people, about the dangers of drug addiction and the networks involved in drug trafficking.

This year, more than 75 vintage cars and bikes will take part in the rally. The flag-off will be done by Home Minister Dr G Parameshwara at 9 am from the Grand Steps of Vidhana Soudha.

The rally will move along Ambedkar Veedhi, Cubbon Road, MG Road, Brigade Road, Vittal Mallya Road, and Mysore Road before concluding at the Big Banyan Resort in Ramanagara district.

As part of the awareness drive, the police will also conduct outreach programmes at MG Road Metro Station, St Joseph's College on Vittal Mallya Road, and RV Engineering College on Mysore Road. These sessions will focus on educating students and the general public about the ill effects of drugs, preventive measures, and the role of community participation in tackling drug abuse and illegal peddling. The city police urged citizens to help build a safer, drug-free Bengaluru. –BMB

Karnataka expands star-gazing initiative

Karnataka is preparing to expand its flagship telescope distribution scheme beyond the KREIS residential schools to a larger network of government schools, Minister for Science and Technology NS Boseraju said on Thursday.

The proposal for additional funding will be presented to the Chief Minister during the next budget meeting, he added.

The minister was speaking after inaugurating a training programme for Karnataka Residential Educational Institutions Society (KREIS) school teachers on telescope management at the Jawaharlal Nehru Planetarium, his office said in a statement.

The initiative is part of the government's push to strengthen astronomy-based learning across the state.

Boseraju said the Science and Technology Department plans to expand telescope distribution, highlighting that 833 KREIS schools and PU colleges have already received telescopes, costing Rs 3 crore—a record nationwide. –PTI

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I Shrisha chandrakant Hiremath R/o 303 sovereign park Apt 56 KR road Basavanagudi Bengaluru Have changed my name to Shrisha Hiremath for all purpose

I, Adithya S/o BR Shashikanth R/o 5M 205.Provident Sunworth Apts,Nr. Doddabele Venkatapura Po Chudenapura Bangalore 560060 have changed my name to Adithya S

I, Manjunatha S R S/o S R Ramaiah R/o 46, Manjusha Nilaya, Jarakabande Kaval, M S Palya, Teachers Layout, Vidyaranyapura, B'luru-560097 have changed my name to Manjunath S R for all purposes.

I, Sahil S Jain s/o Suresh Kumar, R/o Flat No-202 4th floor No-63 Romsa Tower Magadi Main Road, B'luru-560023 have changed my name to Sahil Suresh Kumar for all Purposes.

I, ABDUL AZEEZ NAHUSHAD AHMED, Residing at No 22, 1st Floor, 2nd Cross, Vinayakanagar, Puttenahalli, JP Nagar 5th Phase, Bangalore-560078, I here by declare that my correct name A NOUSHAD AHMED, vide affidavit dated 04/12/2025 sworn before Notary Aravind Patil G.G Bangalore

I, POORNA W/o KRISHNA MOORTHY H T, R/o. A 201, Mithuna White Water Apartment, Srirmpura Cross, Srirampura Main Road, Near JNCASR, Jakkur, Bangalore - 560064, have changed my name from POORNA KRISHNAMOORTHY To POORNA.

I, SEEMA S S D/o SRIDHAR MURTHY, R/o No 13, Hutchins Main Road, St. Thomas Town, Oppo Arun Ice Cream Bengaluru -560084. I have changed my name to SEEMA KHAN vide affidavit dated: 20/11/2025 Before Notary Ramachandrappa. C Bangalore.

I Maxine Maria Lever D/o Harold Jerome BrowneW/O Joseph Herman Lever 220/3,' UDAYA ' 1st floor VST road, behind Banaswadi railway station, lingarajapuram. Bengaluru, Karnataka 560084 have changed my name from Miss Maxine Maria Browne to Mrs Maxine Maria Lever for all purposes.

tender & notices

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the General Public that my client has agreed to purchase the property described in the schedule below from **K.T. PRABHAKAR S/o. B. Thimmarayappa** (Sy. No.41/5, Extent 15 Guntas and Sy. No.42/3, Extent 01 Acre 19 Guntas) residing at No.183, Bidaragere Road, Behind Muniyappa Layout, Venkatraju Layout, Anekal, Bengaluru-562106, and T. Shashidev Prasad S/o. B. Thimmarayappa (Sy. No.41/4, Extent 15 Guntas and Sy. No.42/2, Extent 01 Acre 19 Guntas) residing at No. 109, Site No. 314, 1st Cross, Anekal Main Road, Teachers Colony, Chandapura, Bengaluru-560099. If any persons /s has/have any claim / right, title and interest in the schedule property or have any objections, can lodge the complaint same with the undersigned with documentary proof, within **Two (14 Days) Weeks** from the date of publication of the notice. If no claim / objection exists and my client will proceed to complete the sale transaction. Any Claims/ objections received beyond the stipulated period will not be entertained.

SCHEDULE

All that piece and parcel of the immovable property being agricultural Land bearing **1).**Old Sy. No. 41/4New Sy. No. 41/5 measuring 15 guntas, **2).** Old Sy. No. 42 New Sy. No.42/3 measuring 01 acre 19 guntas, **3).** Sy. No. 41/4 measuring 15 guntas and **4).** Old Sy. No. 42 New Sy. No. 42/2 measuring 01 acre 19 guntas totally measuring 03 acres 28 guntas, situated at Besthamanahalli Village, Kasaba Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bengaluru Urban District.

Shashidhar Gowda - Advocate
No.16, Shree Guru Kaarunya, Durganagar, Mylasandra, R.R. Nagar, Bengaluru-560059, Mobile No.**88848 55000**
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TRICHY RAMESHWARAM KANYAKUMARI 5/7*10** DAYS
DEC: 6, 7*, 11, 11**, 14*, 16, 20, 21, 21*, 22**, 24, 26, 28* JAN: 16, 21, 26
ANDHRA PRADESH WITH STATUE OF EQUALITY 10/6* DAYS
DEC: 12, 14*, 21*, 22, 25, 28* JAN: 1, 4*, 11, 11*, 18*, 21, 25*
SHIRDI NASIK/PANCHA JYOTHIRLINGA* 7* DAYS
DEC: 8*, 15*, 28, 29* JAN: 4, 5*, 11, 12*, 18, 19*, 25, 26*
KERALA SPECIAL/ NAVAGRAHA DARSHAN* 7/4* DAYS
DEC: 7, 8*, 14, 21, 22*, 28, 29* JAN: 1, 5*, 11, 12* 18, 19*, 25, 26*
SOUTH INDIA 7/10* DAYS EX: MANGALORE DEC: 15, 22, 22* 29 JAN: 19, 26
SOUTH INDIA 9/11* DAYS EX: HUBBALLI DEC: 12, 12* JAN: 16*, 20, 27* 30

WIN WIN SITUATION

Why are some people extremely competitive while others are so chill?

If you've ever been on the sidelines at an under-12s team sport, you will know that some children are fiercely competitive, while others are there simply to socialise.

In the workplace, two colleagues might respond differently to the same piece of feedback, where one will go into overdrive to prove themselves, while the other will easily move on.

And we all know what happens on family Monopoly nights. It's the ultimate reminder that competitiveness can test even the closest relationships.

Being more or less competitive has advantages and disadvantages, and these depend entirely on the context. But what actually shapes these differences in how competitive we are, and can we choose to change?

What exactly is competitiveness?

Competitiveness is more than just wanting to win. It is a complex tendency to strive to outperform others and evaluate success by comparing ourselves to those around us. People may enjoy aspects of being competitive, with satisfaction coming from both the effort involved and from performing well.

Competitive behaviour may be related to motivation for self-improvement as well as individual achievement.

If we're highly motivated to win, improve performance and evaluate ourselves in comparison to others, we may be more prone to be highly competitive.

From an evolutionary perspective, it has also helped us to survive. As a social species, our competitiveness can allow us to gain resources, status and, importantly, relationships.

The personality traits of extraversion and conscientiousness have been found to be higher among individuals who are more competitive. These traits are related to goal-directed striving, persistence and assertiveness – all integral when it comes to competitiveness.

So, we may be predisposed to be competitive based on personality traits. To some extent, personality traits are determined by genetics.

However, it's not just down to biology alone. The intensity of competitiveness is also intertwined with our environment.

Your culture has an impact on how competitive you are

Competitive families, classrooms or workplaces can intensify competitive feelings, while more cooperative settings can reduce them.

For instance, research has found that higher parental involvement and expectations can positively influence academic achievement, but also may make children more competitive.

Competitiveness is also interpreted and expressed differently across cultures. Traditionally, individualistic cultures may be more outwardly competitive, while collectivist cultures may be more indirectly competitive in an effort to preserve group cohesion.

If you're being indirectly competitive, this might manifest as withholding useful information from others, comparing yourself to others a lot, or closely watching the success of your peers.

Can we measure competitiveness?

Research suggests competitiveness is multifaceted, and different measures emphasise different psychological processes.

While there are several questionnaires available that measure someone's level of competitiveness, there is still debate around what underlying dimensions these measures should capture.

For example, a 2014 study developed a measure that involved four dimensions: general competitiveness, dominance, competitive affectivity (how much the person enjoys competing), and personal enhancement.

In addition, another attempt to measure competitiveness published in 2018 found that enjoyment of competition (motivation and perceived value), and conscientiousness (being assertive) were the most important dimensions to measure.

All this shows that competitiveness is not a single trait. Instead, it's a cluster of related motivations and behaviours.

What are the pros and cons of being highly competitive?

Being more competitive is related to benefits such as high performance, motivation and achievement. However, there are also costs.

Studies suggest that if individuals are more focused on their social rank and rank themselves unfavourably, they may be more likely to experience symptoms of depression and anxiety. In fact, one process of competitiveness – social comparison – has been consistently linked to poor mental health outcomes.

Competitiveness in schools has also been found to be related to increased stress and anxiety.

In the context of individual performance, competing against a higher performer may enhance performance, according to a study where participants were asked to perform a neurocognitive test.

However, cooperation, even with a lower-performing partner, was associated with equal levels of achievement.

What's more, this study found that competition was associated with increased physiological arousal and stress, while cooperation was not.

Is it possible to become less competitive?

While there are some personality traits we might not have control over, we can change some aspects of our competitiveness.

Behaving in a more pro-social way – through greater cooperation, sharing and helping – may reduce your competitiveness.

Additionally, revisiting the ways in which we evaluate and relate to ourselves may contribute to developing a more balanced and adaptive relationship to competitiveness. Acceptance and commitment therapy and compassion-focused therapy can be helpful in supporting these changes.

Ultimately, the research in this space is complex, and there is more to learn. While a moderate level of competitiveness can be beneficial, it's important to balance the cost. Think about your goals – are you in it to win at all costs? Or to do your best and make friends?

(By Inge Gnatt and Kathleen de Boer, Swinburne University of Technology, The Conversation)

MIRRORLIGHTS

Study finds evidence on how nanoplastics from single-use PET bottles harm body

Nanoplastics derived from single-use PET bottles can directly disrupt key biological systems that are vital for human health, according to a study led by the Institute of Nano Science and Technology, Mohali (INST), an autonomous institute of the Department of Science and Technology (DST), on Thursday.

Nanoplastics, found in food and water, are a global concern and are increasingly being detected inside the human body. But their exact effects remain poorly understood.

While many studies had focused on how plastics pollute the environment or damage host tissues, almost nothing was known about their direct impact on beneficial gut microbes that are central to human health.

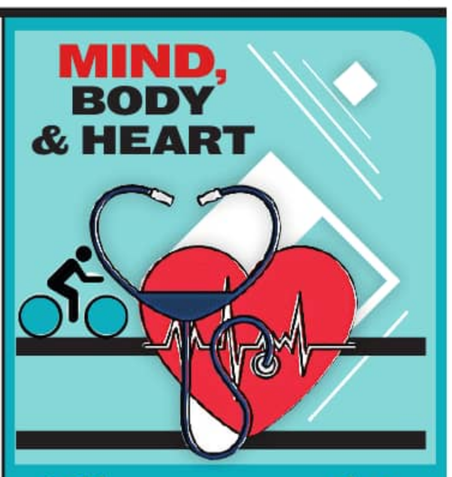
The team led by Prashant Sharma and Sakshi Dagariya from the Chemical Biology Unit at INST found the first clear evidence of profound consequences to human health.

The researchers found that long-term exposure reduced bacterial growth, colonisation, and protective functions, while increasing stress responses and sensitivity to antibiotics.

"Together, the findings explain that nano-plastics from everyday plastics are biologically active particles that can interfere with gut health, blood stability, and cellular function," said the researchers in the paper published in the journal Nanoscale Advances.

"The nanoparticles induce DNA damage, oxidative stress, and inflammatory responses in human epithelial cells during prolonged exposure, posing risks to human health that were previously unrecognised," the researchers said.

—IANS



All you need to know about...

HPV vaccine

Single shot also effective

A single HPV vaccination appears just as effective as two doses at preventing the viral infection that causes cervical cancer, researchers reported Wednesday.

What is HPV

HPV, or human papillomavirus, is very common and spread through sex. Most HPV infections clear up on their own but some linger, causing cancers that appear years later, including cervical cancer in women and rarer cancers in both women and men.

HPV vaccination has been recommended for U.S. girls since 2006 and already the nation is counting fewer cases of precancerous cervical lesions among women in their 20s —- the first age group to start getting the shots back when they were tweens or teens.

But cervical cancer kills about 340,000 women worldwide annually — and the new findings from a huge study in Costa Rica could help spur global efforts to protect more girls and young women in harder-to-reach low-income countries.

97% protection

Led by the U.S. National Cancer Institute, the study enrolled more than 20,000 girls between ages 12 and 16. They all were tracked for five years, receiving regular cervical tests for the most cancer-prone HPV strains. Infection rates were compared to a separate unvaccinated group.

A single HPV shot provided about 97% protection, similar to two doses, concluded researchers from the NCI and Costa Rica's Agency for Biomedical Research. The findings were reported in the New England Journal of Medicine.

Previous studies had suggested one dose could work well but the new findings confirm strong protection for at least five years, Dr. Ruanne Barnabas, an infectious disease specialist at Massachusetts General Hospital, wrote in an accompanying editorial. —AP

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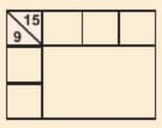
SOLVE IT IN A MINUTE

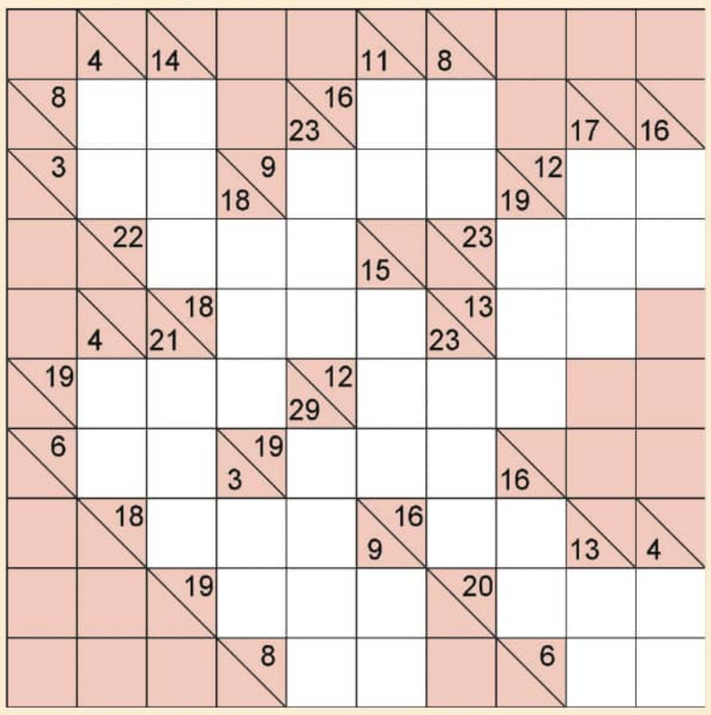
The sum of the digits in a 3-digit number is 18 and the product is 126. What numbers satisfy these constraints?

Kakuro

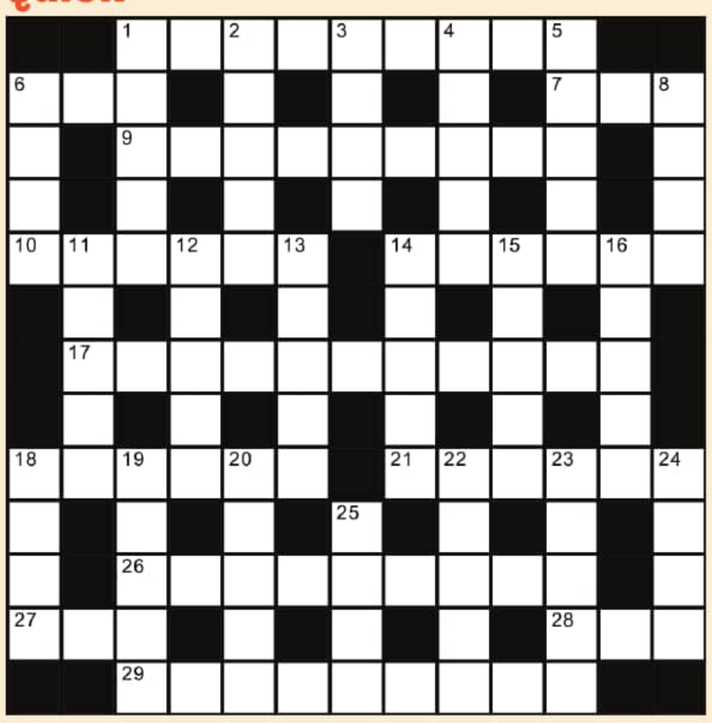
The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.



Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

1 An excellent marksman, should we say? (5,4)
6 Take On Me group (1-2)
7 Revered personality _Khan (3)
9 Popular dessert in Karnataka and the rest of the country as well (6,3)
10 Column; post (6)
14 A cricket sundry (2-4)
17 Having sound views and principles, not a Socialist? (5-6)
18 Merges or brings together (6)
21 Secure by intimidation (6)
26 Site of erotic caves in M.P. (9)
27 Cleaning agent (3)
28 __ up : exhaust with overwork? (3)
29 Device meting out measured proportions (9)

DOWN

1 Ship of the desert (5)
2 Between ports (2,3)
3 Pavement edging (4)
4 Short name for an African animal (5)
5 ___ _ chance : dare ? (4,1)
6 Letters of urgency (4)
8 Russian sea (4)
11 ___ Khan; Pakistani cricketer and politician (5)
12 Walk or run informally speaking? (3,2)
13 Neural networks (5)
14 Unsophisticated (5)
15 Bathroom fixture (5)
16 John ___ : old time Hollywood star-"older" anagram? (5)
18 Mountain range (4)
19 Annoyed or irritated (5)
20 Dame Edith ____ : famous actress? (5)
22 Diagnostic aids for orthopaedists (1-4)
23 Smell (5)
24 Oak for example (4)
25 Unable to speak (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: Y EQUALS G

IWUT XZXDWAWII BI AKP MHIP X CHAEG KT XOBAK XEBJI CHOLBAY PKYWPGWD.

Linemaro

I could flirt with you, but I'd rather allure you with my awkwardness

Mindchow

Take risks in your life. If you win, you can lead; if you lose, you can guide

Joke of the day

Think of a number between 0 and 20. Add 32 to it. Multiply by 2. Subtract 1. Now close your eyes. It's dark, isn't it

Loop

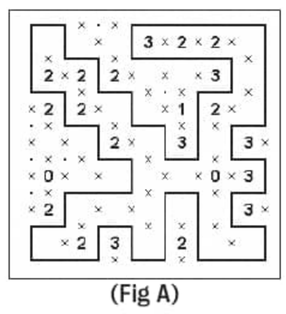
Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

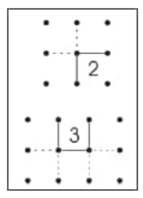
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

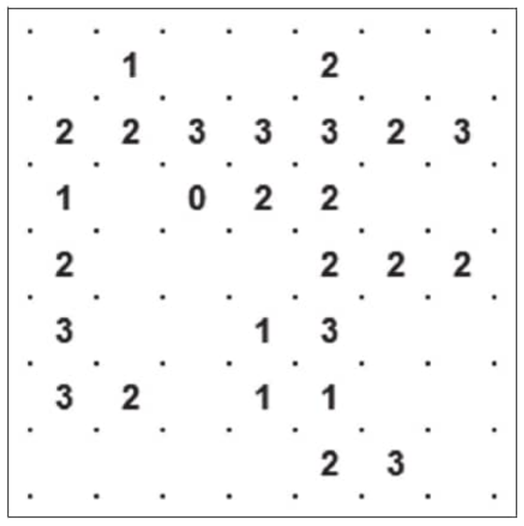
Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



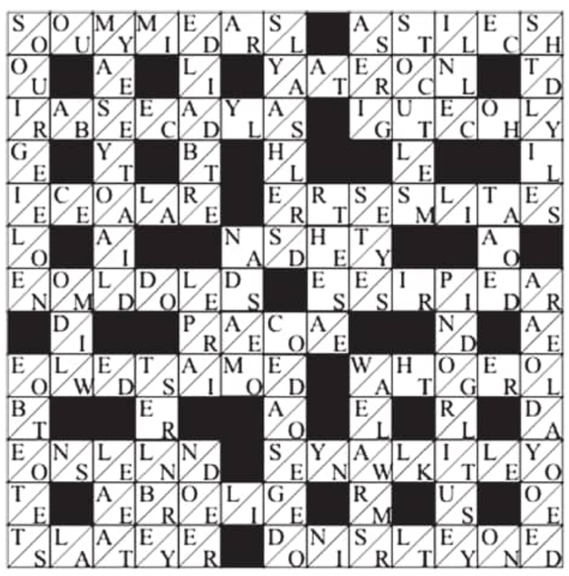
(Fig A)



(Fig B) Not Allowed



Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...

1	2	3	4	5
6				
7				
8				
9	X			

ACROSS

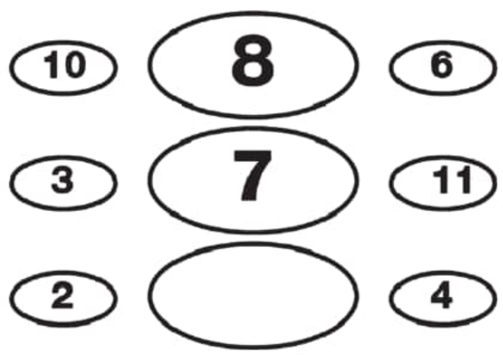
1 Grasp; 6 Three; 7 Dolen; 8 Ike, no; 9 Pet ax

DOWN

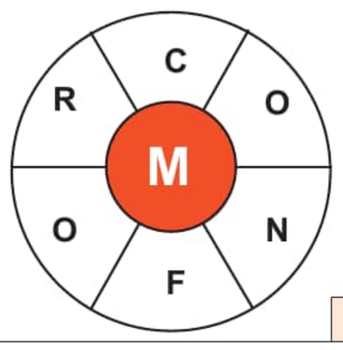
1 Tokes; 2 LX hop; 3 Pride; 4 An ear; 5 Tenge

Mensapuzzle

Which number will complete this teaser?



Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

06 Average; **07** Good; **09** Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

	3	2				5		
				2	1			
8	7		9			3		
	5		2	9				
6		1				8		9
				7	6		4	
		5			3		2	1
			8	4				
		4				7	3	

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy = 30
6 7 8 9

Medium = 3
8 5 4 3

Hard = 4
2 3 7 9

Hocusfocus

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

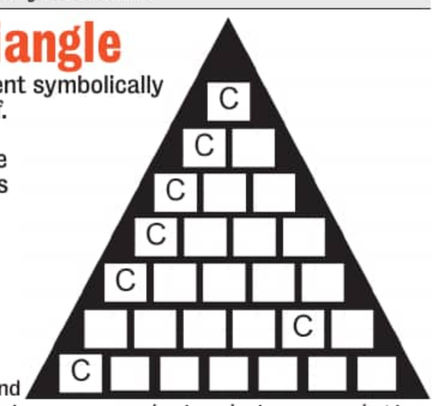
Differences: 1. Collar is different. 2. Hat is larger. 3. Sleeve is shorter. 4. Windowsill is added. 5. Sign is different. 6. Hair is different.

Riddler

King Ferdinand has no immediate living relatives and decides to hold a contest to find a worthy successor when he dies. He gives a seed to every contestant and explains that the person with the healthiest and most beautiful plant will win the throne. When the final day of the contest arrives, the king finds hundreds of plants of all shapes and sizes. However, he ignores them and awards the throne to a girl holding a pot with only moist dirt. Why did she win?

Alpha triangle

1 Diamond's element symbolically
2 Commanding Off.
3 Swindle
4 Dunce cap shape
5 Group of witches
6 Beginner
7 Conspire



Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE

COMICS

Popeye

YOU CAN'T SEND THOSE POOR BABIES ALONE INTO SPACE!
YA IS RIGHT, OLIVE!
WILL YOU STAN' OVER HERE?
THEY WON'T BE ALONE... A CLONE OF YERS WILL GO WIT' EACH OF 'EM!
ZUMP! ZUMP!
popeye.com
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Bizarrotrip

Diamond Lil

I TRIED THAT NEW CHINESE PLACE TODAY
IT'S CALLED THE WEIGHT GAIN CAFE
WHAT DID YOU HAVE?
GENERAL TSO'S THICKEN
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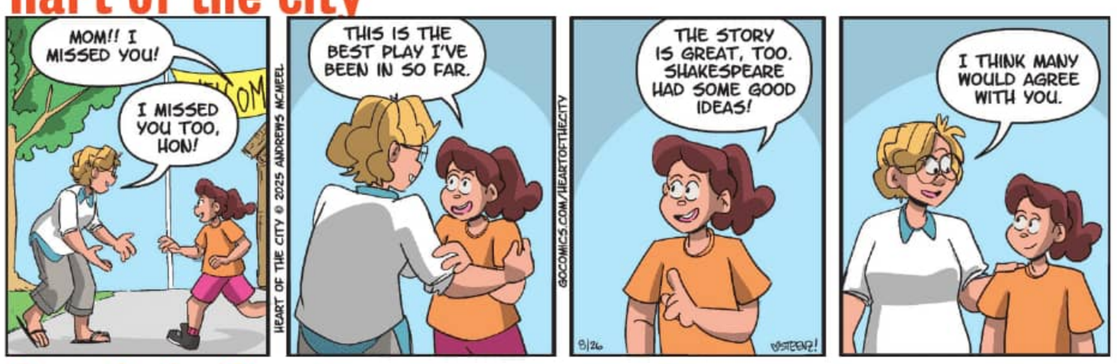
Hart of the city


MOM!! I MISSED YOU!
I MISSED YOU TOO, HON!
THIS IS THE BEST PLAY I'VE BEEN IN SO FAR.
THE STORY IS GREAT, TOO. SHAKESPEARE HAD SOME GOOD IDEAS!
I THINK MANY WOULD AGREE WITH YOU.
HEART OF THE CITY © 2025 ANDREWS MCMEEL
@OCOMICS.COM/HEARTOFTHECITY

Crankshaft

DAD... YOU'VE GOT TO COME OUT FROM UNDER THE BED!
NO, I DON'T!
NOW I DON'T HAVE TO DEAL WITH KIDS THROWING UP ON THE BUS... THE TERRIBLE TUCKER TWINS... OR EVEN MOWING THE LAWN WHEN I GET HOME!
I DON'T KNOW WHY I DIDN'T THINK OF THIS SOONER!
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BATIUK & DAVIS tombatiuk.com/books
8-26

Mutts

I SEE YOU'RE OFFERING YOUR BACKYARD AS A SANCTUARY— BUT IS IT SAFE?
Welcome
mutts.com
www.kingfeatures.com
WELL, WE'RE NOT PLANNING TO BUILD ANY SUPERSTORES, CONDOS OR CHEMICAL PLANTS.
I'M IN!
JUST LOOK OUT FOR THE JACUZZI!
Welcome
8·26

WRITTEN IN THE STARS

DR SUNDEEP KOCHAR

If it's your birthday today

Today asks you to teach what you have recently learned, Sagittarius. Your perspective is uniquely valuable to someone who feels stuck or uncertain about their path forward. Sharing your philosophical optimism will illuminate their way, reinforcing your own beliefs in the process. Be mindful of overpromising on travel timelines, though; patience ensures a smoother passage later this week.

Aries Mar 21–Apr 20

Slow down and let life unfold naturally today. You often rush ahead, but patience brings clarity now. Pace yourself, balance and timing will guide you better than competition ever could.

Taurus Apr 21–May 20

There's quiet movement happening behind the scenes, but nothing harmful. Stay alert, not anxious. The stars encourage calm awareness, observe, adapt, and trust that unseen developments will ultimately support you.

Gemini May 21–Jun 21

Decision-making feels unclear under today's circumstances, but that's okay. Let others take the lead for now. Cosmic energy supports collaboration, sometimes releasing control helps you find the direction you truly need.

Cancer Jun 22–July 23

You're expecting surprises, but not all unexpected events are bad. In fact, they'll likely benefit you. Shift from caution to optimism, embracing change today could bring hidden blessings your way.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23

Stay positive even if luck seems off today. Your mindset determines your reality. What feels unlucky might simply be redirection, trust timing and continue radiating confidence and optimism forward.

Virgo Aug 24–Sep 23

Though practical, you're open-minded enough to evolve. If change feels right, act on it. Focus on your desired result and trust the universe to align circumstances beautifully in your favour.

Libra Sep 24–Oct 22

You might overhear valuable information today, use it wisely. Strategic thinking can improve your finances. If others reveal too much, see it as an opportunity and make smart choices that reward you.

Scorpio Oct 23–Nov 22

You don't need to oversell yourself professionally. True worth is self-evident. If someone fails to recognise your value, they're not meant to lead you. Trust your power and walk away.

Sagittarius Nov 23–Dec 22

Criticism may sting unusually today, but remember, it doesn't define you. Stay focused on your goals and let opinions fade into background noise. Confidence and persistence will silence all doubts.

Capricorn Dec 23–Jan 20

Don't feel intimidated by authority figures today. Collaboration can strengthen your position. Stay receptive, respect hierarchy, but remember your worth, you're an asset, not a subordinate. Mutual respect ensures great outcomes.

Aquarius Jan 21–Feb 19

After excitement comes calm, it's natural. If your energy dips, rest instead of resisting it. You'll recharge quickly and return to social, confident form just as the week approaches.

Pisces Feb 20–Mar 20

Trust your intuition about someone new, it's sharp today. Their motives may not align with yours, especially financially. Stay cautious, protect your interests, and let instincts guide you toward safety.

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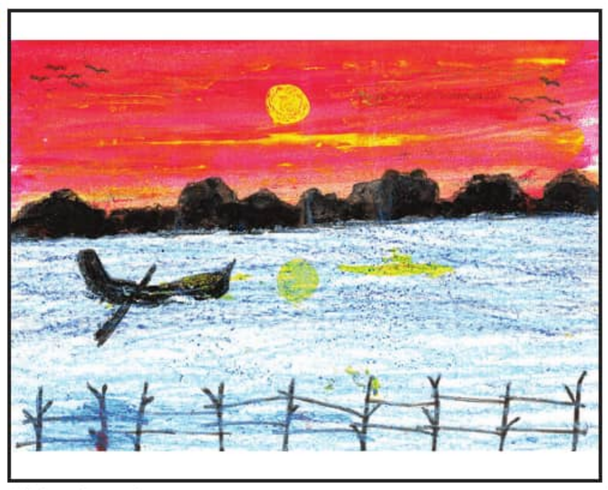
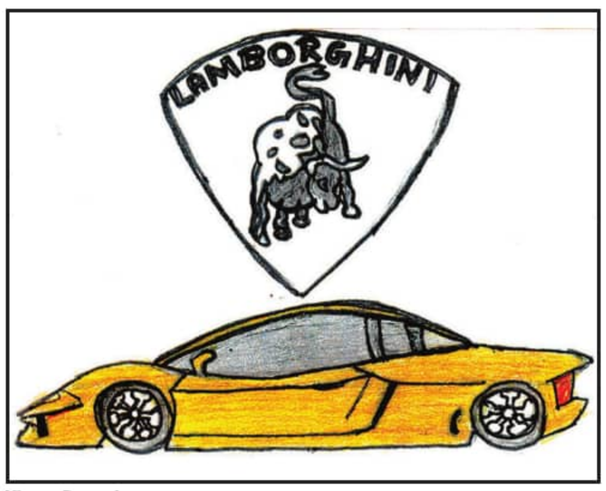
KIDZONE



Adithya, Bengaluru



Vinay, Bengaluru

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Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

SOLUTIONS

RIDDLER King Ferdinand was a kind and trusting man and wanted to be sure he found an honest heir. He gave small pebbles to all the contestants, claiming they were seeds. Therefore, any contestant with a plant had switched their "seed" in order to win. Everyone but the girl had been dishonest.

SOLVE IN 1M 2 ; 7 ; & 9 combination; Total six numbers; 279, 297, 729, 792, 927, 972

FAST FIVE

S	P	R	A	G
T	H	E	R	E
O	L	D	E	N
K	O	I	N	E
E	X	P	A	T

STRIKE OUT

S	U	M	M	E	R	S		S	T	I	T	E	S	
U		A		L		A		A	R	O	N		T	
R	A	S	C	A	L	S		I	T	C	H	Y		
G		T		T		H			E			L		
E	C	O	L	E		E	R	E	M	I	T	E		
O		I		A	S	H	Y		O					
N	O	D	D	E	D		E	E	R	I	E	R		
O		I		P	A	C	A		D		E			
O	L	D	T	I	M	E		W	H	O	R	L		
B		E		A		E		L			A			
E	N	D		S		N	A	K	I	L	Y			
R		R		V		M			R		D			
U	N	I	T	E	S		E	X	T	O	R	T		
A		I		E		V		E		E				
R	I	G	H	T	M	I	N	D	E	D				
M		E		E		A		I		O				
P	I	L	L	A	R		N	O	B	A	L	L		
A		E		B		P		E		A				
S	M	Y	S	O	R	E	P	A	K	R				
A	H	A		T		E		I		A	G	A		
C	R	A	C	K	S	H	O	T						

QUICK

MENSA PUZZLE 3. In each row, add the left hand numbers and divide by 2 to get the central value.

QUOTE UNCODE Self awareness is not just a bunch of amino acids bumping together.

BULL'S EYE CONFORM, form, from, moon, moor, morn, morn, room

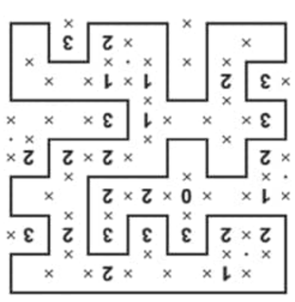
SUDOKU

1	3	2	6	8	7	5	9	4
5	4	9	3	2	1	6	8	7
8	7	6	9	5	4	3	1	2
4	5	7	2	9	3	8	6	1
6	2	1	4	3	5	8	7	9
3	9	8	1	7	6	2	4	5
9	8	5	7	6	3	4	2	1
7	1	3	8	4	2	9	5	6
2	6	4	5	1	9	7	3	8

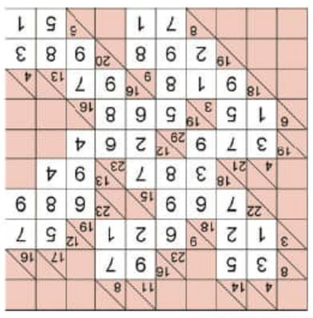
ALPHA TRIANGLE
C, CO, Con, Cone, Coven, Novice, Connive.

GO FIGURE
Easy
9 + 6 + 7 + 8 = 30
Medium
3 x 5–8–4 = 3
Hard
3–9 \ 2 + 7 = 4

LOOP



KAKURO



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Seven-year romance blossoms

Rashmika requests patience from fans as speculation builds around wedding plans with longtime partner Vijay Deverakonda

Vijay Deverakonda's team has confirmed his engagement to longtime partner and frequent co-star Rashmika Mandanna, marking a significant milestone in the couple's nearly seven-year relationship. The pair, who first won hearts with their chemistry in Geetha Govindam and later in Dear Comrade, reportedly held a private engagement ceremony in October 2025. They are now said to be preparing for a February 2026 wedding, a development that fans have eagerly anticipated for years.

So far, an official joint statement from the Mandanna and Deverakonda families has not been released, but sources close to both actors indicate that the announcement will be made once final wedding arrangements are complete.

Amid ongoing speculation about a grand destination wedding in Rajasthan, Rashmika commented on the rumours during an interaction with The Hollywood Reporter India. While she chose not to confirm or deny the details, she gently requested patience from fans and the media. "I wouldn't like to confirm or deny the marriage. I will just say when it's to be spoken about, we shall," she said, opting to keep specifics private for now.

In November, during the success meet of her acclaimed film The Girlfriend in Hyderabad, Rashmika became emotional while speaking about Vijay's influence on her life and work. "Viju, you've been a part of this film since the beginning… and you're a part of the success of the film. You've been a part of this whole journey so personally. I can just hope that everyone has a Vijay Deverakonda in their lives because that's a blessing," she said, drawing loud cheers from the audience.

She later elaborated on the bond they share, explaining how his support has helped her navigate difficult phases. "Luckily, I have a partner who has healed me from a pain he didn't cause," Rashmika revealed in an interview, adding that she felt deep gratitude for his presence in her life.

Her affection for Vijay became even more evident during a town hall event when she was asked which of her co-stars she would choose to marry. Without hesitation, she replied, "Yes, I will marry Vijay," prompting enthusiastic applause from the crowd.

While promoting The Girlfriend, Rashmika also spoke about her ideal partner, in remarks widely interpreted as a tribute to Vijay. "If there is a war against me tomorrow, I know that man will fight with me. I'll do the same—I'll take a bullet for him any day. That is my kind of person," she said.

Their relationship, strengthened through years of friendship, shared projects, and unspoken understanding, now appears to be moving toward a long-awaited wedding in early 2026.

— ETimes

SANDALWOOD SHOTS
Y MAHESWARA REDDY

Artistes' lives

The muhurat function of Veshagalu was held at GK Grand Arena on Mysuru Road. Deputy Superintendent of Police Rajesh sounded the clapboard for the opening scene, which featured Abhijnana Shakuntala, the classic love story of Dushyant and Shakuntala. A large theatre set was created under art director Malur Vijay's supervision to recreate the ambience for the muhurat shot. The film is based on a short story by journalist and author late Ravi Belagere. Veshagalu is produced by Kishan Rao Dalavi under the Green Tree Studios banner, with Dalavi also directing the project. Actor Srinagar Kitty has been cast in dual roles—Basappa and Basamma—in a narrative highlighting the lives and struggles of theatre artists around the year 2000. Dalavi shared that he had acted in several plays and worked as an assistant director before taking up this project. "I read the short story and felt it deserved a cinematic adaptation. Bhavana Belagere, daughter of late Ravi Belagere, approved the idea," he said.

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